

MARVEL
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THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS™

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It's got adventure! It's got excitement! It's got tension! It's even got a little bit of romance thrown in for good measure. Issue twenty-five of **THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS** certainly has its moments. Moments of dread for Winston, when an unexpected guest comes to stay at HQ in **One of the Family!** Moments of fear in **Winston's Diary** when Egon and Winston put their lives on the line! Moments of realisation in **Sorority Slimer**, when The Ghostbusters are called out to bust a rather familiar spook and, last but not least, moments of intrepidation in **Haunted Melodies**, when Egon finally decides to take Janine out on a date! So, don't waste another moment, dive in and get reading!

If all this Ghostbusters' adventure isn't enough to keep you perched on the edge of your seat, there's more original, spooky adventure every fortnight in The MARVEL BUMPER COMIC. Each issue features a brand new story featuring The Real Ghostbusters plus, all your other favourite Marvel characters!

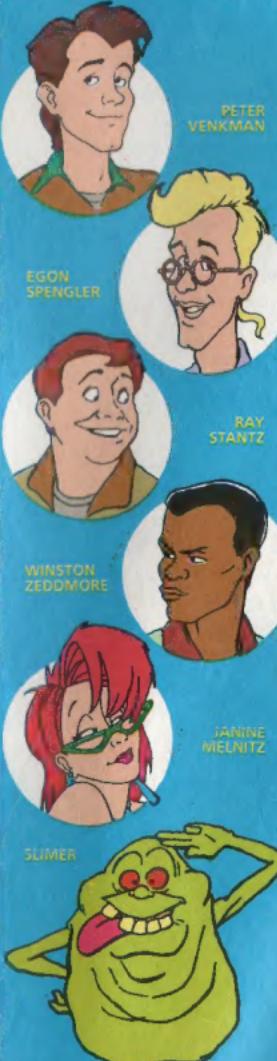
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THE REAL GHOST BUSTERS™



THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS™

HAUNTED

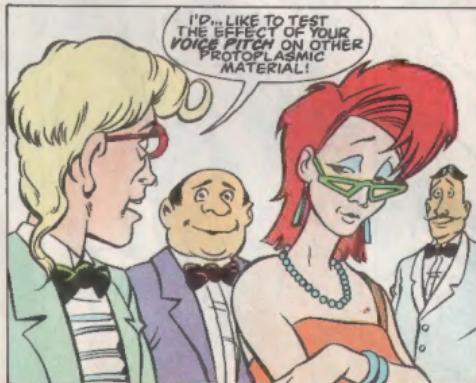
melodies

A TRENDY BISTRO ON
THE UPPER EAST SIDE
OF NEW YORK ...









SPENGLER'S

SPIRIT GUIDE

Our ecto-containment unit is probably the very best in the entire western world. Heck, why all this false modesty? It is the best in the western world.

Of course, this could have something to do with the fact that it is also the *only* ecto-containment unit in the western world. However, this hasn't always been the case. Until three or four years ago there were several other ecto-units around. Let me tell you about them:

THE BARNISH-GROUTE EXPERIMENT

We sure have had our fair share of problems with our containment unit. Ray was sucked into it, Walter Peck turned it off, releasing all the ghosts. However, these are just small potatoes compared with the problems that beset the unit built by Professors Barnish and Groute at Cambridge in the 1940's. It was basically an apparatus consisting of an old gramophone, three refrigerator motors and a captured German X-ray machine. The B/G unit (as it was known) could hold as many as three ghosts at any one time. Three **SMALL** ghosts. They only discovered its minuscule capacity when they tried putting ghosts in it. They'd invited respected ghost hunters from all over the country to come and deposit their trapped ghosts in their B/G unit. The load reached three full-torsos, six semi-vaporous floaters, a class six pointy-



PART 25

toothed demon and two banishes. Then, Herbert Visquid of Manchester tried to load in a class eight mass-disturber and the already overstretched capacity of the B/G unit burst like... well I really don't know what. They heard the pop in Bedford. One hundred and seventeen members of the Paranormal and Humanities Faculty were plastered with a pinky-ochre goo. The Barnish-Groute experiment was over.

THE BAINLEY DEVICE

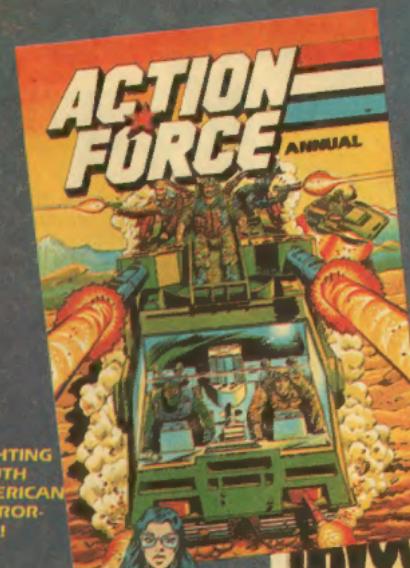
Designed in 1978 by a Cal.Tech. student called Kevin Bainley, this was the USA's first real ecto-containment apparatus. Bainley's method was to utilise video technology, trapping and loading ghosts onto ectoplasmic sensitive video tape. Ghosts could then be stored on separate cartridges and accessed as one would a favourite

film. Unfortunately, the entire stock of his stored material was stolen from the Cal.Tech. buildings in 1982 by video pirates who mistook them for illegal Video Nasties. Which, in a way, I suppose they were. After much nationwide damage, caused by the distribution of these Video Nasties, Bainley's funding was withdrawn and the device abandoned by Cal.Tech.

PROJECT TRAPDOOR

A highly confidential project organised by the American Government and the FBI as part of their Anti-paranormal Research Campaign. They bought up Bainley's equipment from Cal.Tech. and improved it considerably. Much about Project Trapdoor remains confidential at this time but, I am able to tell you that ***** with three ***** and about a dozen of the red ones and all fell into ***** and **** with at least ten minutes to spare. Later, during a long **** the leader of the second ***** through the middle with two wing-type armchairs and half a kipper. Suddenly, and ***** two bottles of cooking oil poured casually across ***** seven repeaters. Politically, this was unacceptable, not to mention messy. Project Trapdoor was closed in 19** due to considerable *** and much hysterical giggling.

LIVE THE ADVENTURE
THIS CHRISTMAS!



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SOUTH
AMERICAN
TERROR-
ISTS!



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SIVE TEXT
STORY SET
IN THE
OUTBACK!



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AGAINST
TIME AS A
DEADLY
NERVE GAS
THREATENS
LIFE AS WE
KNOW IT!



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THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS™

ONE of the FAMILY

OUTSIDE GHOSTBUSTERS' HQ...







WINSTON'S DIARY

THE ADVENTURES OF WINSTON REDDING



Story IAN RIMMER Art ANTHONY WILLIAMS and DAVE HARWOOD

Wednesday, the 30th of December 1988

Wow – I've just got to write this down! It's the weirdest call we've had since – well, yesterday I guess.

Egon and I took the job, driving ECTO-1 out to New Jersey. We get on really well, considering Egon has degrees in subjects I can't even spell, while my IQ ranks alongside that of a small, unsophisticated tree stump. So, when we saw the satellite dish on top of the roof of our caller's home, we unsurprisingly agreed that we had a young electronics whizz-kid for a client. The surprise was that we were wrong.

At the door to greet us stood an elderly, spindly, grouchy-looking man named Norton Dobermann. Being on the wrong side of eighty, he told us he was more or less house-bound, leaving television as his main passion. So, he'd bought the satellite dish out of his savings to provide extra channels. It had all gone well, he claimed, until his TV set had become haunted.

Egon and I exchanged looks. I guess we were both guilty of thinking the same thing – that Norton's TV picture had developed that shadowy effect called 'ghosting', confusing the old man. He put us straight in no uncertain terms. "If you two think I'm some grey-haired old loony who's fallen out of his rocker, forget it! I know *Real Ghostbusters* when I see them and I know real ghosts that need busting – I've got one in my TV!"

Suitably chastened, we investigated. Norton explained that the spirit manifested itself by playing around with the TV output, moving characters from one show into totally different programmes. We entered Norton's living room and saw what he meant. On the TV screen, one of the *Golden Girls* was playing American Football. Better still, she'd just caught a touchdown pass from Joe Montana. "That's amazing!" enthused Egon.

"Not really," I said with a smile. "Montana's still a pretty hot quarter-back."

Egon ignored me and picked up the remote control to begin channel hopping. In quick succession, we saw *Bugs Bunny* win a holiday on *Wheel Of Fortune*, *Mork and Mindy* in *Knightrider*'s car being chased by the *Incredible Hulk*, and *The Equalizer* doing the sums on *Sesame Street*.

"This is much better than ordinary TV," I joked, as Egon flicked to a UK/Australian

import which we guessed was called *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sheep Shearer*. Norton pointed out, however, that the novelty had worn off for him. Being a TV devotee, he wanted to see proper programmes again.

At this point the picture stopped changing. I assumed that Egon had finished channel hopping but, I was wrong. "Very strange," he said. "No matter which channel I select, that same image pops up." Egon then tried an experiment. He pulled the TV's plug from the wall socket but, incredibly, *Crockett* on floor exercises and *Tubbs* on the beam stayed on screen. "Remarkable," concluded Egon. "The TV is clearly possessed. The spook must be somehow manipulating the electronic impulses sent to the set. If it can still do that without electrical power, it must be a very strong demon."

Norton added that he'd changed his TV twice, but still the same things carried on happening. From that, Egon deduced that the spook was actually occupying Norton's electrical system rather than the TV set itself, though for once, my colleague looked stumped when I asked how it had got there. "Until we know that," he went on, "I don't see how we can even attempt a bust!"

Just then, the image of *Tubbs* ballistically turning on the beam faded, to be replaced by a swirling, bewildering mass of continuously changing colour. "What's that?" I asked.

"I wonder," said Egon. "Could that be ... the spirit itself?"

Before we could answer, the room was suddenly filled with a screeching, ear-splitting burst of electronic noise. It lasted just a few seconds and was then replaced by snatches of dialogue from various TV programmes. "Welcome, sports fans, to *Super Bowl 22*. Just pop it in the oven for a tasty casserole dish and remember – 8 out of 10 cats prefer their milk in a saucer!"

"What!?" I yelled above the seemingly mindless nonsense.

It continued. "Welcome back to the bowling final, and we've just received pictures via the satellite of that dishy actress from *Dukes of Hazzard*! So, enjoy that bowl of Corn Flakes because the dish ran away with the spoon!"

"Oh terrific," I moaned. "We've got a TV that's spouting gibberish!"

"It's garbled all right but, perhaps the spook is

trying to communicate using the only language it knows — TV language. There was a common thread to all that. Something about bowls, or dishes . . ."

"The satellite dish?" Norton ventured, and we both turned and smiled broadly at the wise old man.

"Congratulations!" the TV continued. "You've won tonight's star prize . . . and moving right along — oh, disaster for *Cram!* He's completely boxed in on the curve! It's a trap, *Dempsey* — run! And the headlines again — freedom fighters struggle on in limbo, and a report out today claims that the best things in life are no longer free. More in our later bulletins."

"Hey — I get it," I said. "The spook's trying to tell us it's trapped, right? It got into Norton's electrical system through the satellite dish, but can't get free again."

"Hmm — you know what we need here . . ." mused Egon, wearing a heavy frown. I expected him to continue by saying he required some bizarre piece of East European equipment with a triple-barrelled name ending in 'scope'. You could have knocked me down with a TV licence when he finally finished the sentence. ". . . a ladder — to climb up to the roof and examine the satellite dish."

Norton pointed us in the direction of a ladder, then in the direction of the roof. Something told me he didn't have much faith in us either, particularly when Egon, after studying the dish and its connections, concluded that it was probably a million-to-one chance of freak atmospheric conditions that had entrapped the spook in the first place.

"Then if those million-to-one freak atmospheric conditions don't repeat themselves," I ventured, "the spook stays trapped in Norton's system?"

"Yes," agreed Egon. "Unless we want to risk the Spengler-Zeddmore Historical Side Effect."

Although the names were familiar, I didn't like the sound of that. When Egon explained it fully, I liked it even less. Egon could rig the satellite dish to send rather than receive, but he'd need both our Proton Packs to provide the power. That meant that we'd be defenceless if the spirit got free. As things stood, the ghost was trapped, but we Ghostbusters were talking about freeing it, leaving ourselves

open to attack by our own actions. "That's why it's called the Spengler-Zeddmore Historical Side Effect," continued Egon. "The side effect is that Spengler and Zeddmore might become history."

We explained all this to our client, stressing that a Spengler-Zeddmore-Dobermann Historical Side Effect was an equal possibility. Nevertheless, in distinctly un-octogenarian tones he urged us to "Go for it!"

So, Egon and I climbed back onto the roof where Egon did the necessary with the Proton Packs.

"All set," he said, eventually. Turning to me nervously, he added, "Let's hope it's goodbye from it, and not goodbye from us." Then he threw the switch.

An instant later, the dish began to glow with silver-white light. A low, electronic hum started throbbing in the background, punctuated by quick, loud cracks of energy. They accompanied searing blue light pulses which flared from the centre of the dish. The pulses grew in intensity until a dazzling bright beam rocketted from the dish and scorched into the sky. I closed my eyes and covered my ears to protect my senses from a battering.

Next thing I remember was something touching me on the shoulder. "This is it!" I yelled. "This is the end!"

"Of this mission — yes!" said Egon, who was returning my Proton Pack to my back to get my attention. I opened my eyes to see that the light and sound show was over. "We busted the ghost," Egon continued, "out of its electrical system prison! It's gone-free."

We re-entered Norton's home, but found him utterly engrossed in his favourite TV soap. Judging by the happy smile on his face, the set was completely normal again. We couldn't have disturbed him if we'd wanted to, so we slipped out and made our way home.

Egon and I were both relieved that the powerful spirit we'd set free didn't hang around, even to say goodbye. However, when we arrived back at HQ, Ray couldn't wait to tell us of a strange event that had occurred at roughly the same time as when we'd released the spirit. Apparently, a mysterious message was flashed to every radio and TV set, whether switched on or not, across the entire State. It said, "Goodnight out there, whatever you are."

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST

TRANSFORMERS 194 The savage Seacons are back! Those nautical nightmares have returned to plague the Autobots once more. But what are they doing patrolling the waters off Decepticon island now that it's become a holiday resort for humans? Join us for sun, sea and Seacons at Club Con. Your tour guides are Budianski, Delbo and Hunt.

ACTION FORCE MONTHLY 7 It's a telephone line nightmare in the lead Action Force story, *Smooth Operators*. Smoothing their way through a communications jungle (apart from Lady Jaye, Dial Tone and Low-Light) are Abnett, Hopgood and Hine. There's also a Storm Shadow solo story by Rimmer, McCrea and Baskerville.

THUNDERCATS 87 The Mutants challenge the Thundercats to an Olympic contest! But there's more at stake at these Games than just honour! *Games Without Frontiers* are opened by Carnell, Lanning and Wildman. Plus, the Thundercats must face the Ram-Pager Driller in this issue's exciting text story.

THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS 25 Janine and Egon finally go out on a date. But when a ghostly gal cuts in, Janine gets down to some serious bustin'. *Haunted Melodies* are played by Flaxman and Hopgood. And there's more! Winston's aunt comes to stay in *One Of The Family*, by Carnell and Williams, and Slimer is a ghost-for-hire in *Sorority Slimer*, by Flaxman and Griffiths.

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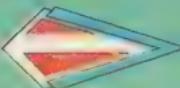


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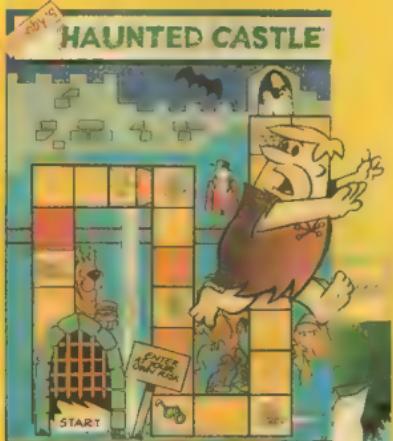
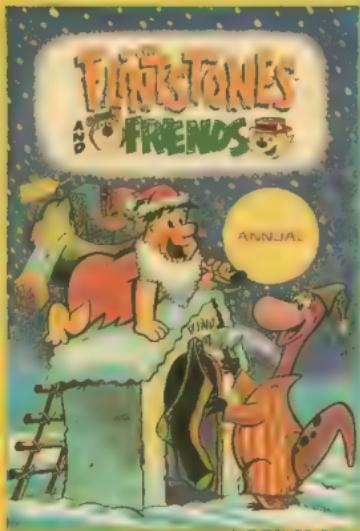
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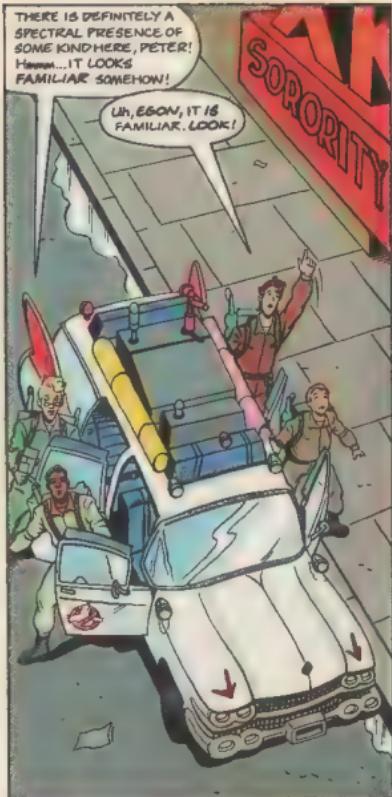
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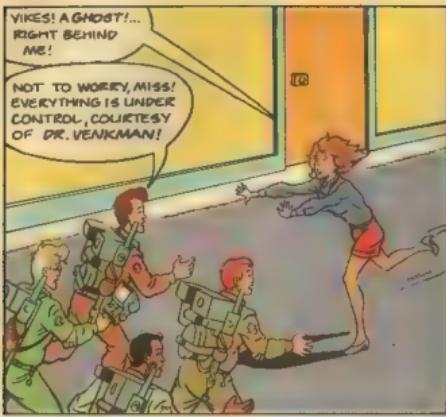


THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS™

SORORITY SLIMER!









HOST WRITING!



Gee, our postman is really struggling now, but keep those letters coming in—I'm beginning to feel loved at last!

Dear Peter . . .

Why does Slimer only slime you and not any of the others? If you pretend to love him, perhaps he'll slime Egon instead!

—Warren Keith, Liverpool

That's a bitsneaky, Warren. All the same, I think I'd rather be slimed than have to act lovingly towards Slimer!

Do you feel more comfortable in evening dress or in your uniforms?

—Craig and Dean Davies, Powys

Thanks for your question. Our uniforms are specially designed to be very comfortable as we have to wear them all the time. However, it's always nice to dress up for special occasions.

I have some questions for you, Peter:

1. Is the Stay-Puft Marshmallow Man really made out of marshmallow?
2. What does ectoplasm feel like?

—Stephen Moss, Fishponds

Thanks for your questions Stephen. 1. Yep! He's a sticky, syrupy gunk-ball! 2. Bleah! In a word—revolting!

I think that SLIMER stands for: Superb Little Incredible Magnificent Exciting Respectable—so admit it, Slimer's okay!

—Damon Stewart, Dyfed

Personally, I think that Slimer stands for: Stupid Loathesome Imbecilic Monstrous Ectoplasmic Ratfink—but then I suppose everyone's entitled to their own opinion!

I would like to know if Janine will ever be a proper Ghostbuster, and if we'll be able to buy the Proton Packs in the shops?

—Gino Caiafa, Slough

What do you mean, Gino, Janine is an important member of the team—a Real Ghostbuster. She's just a little more subtle in her approach than the rest of us. Yes, Proton Packs are available in the shops.

In issue 16, in the story, *Hawaii Fire-Ho!* Egon gets covered in ecto-magma but, on the next page, he is suddenly clean again. Why?

—James Crockford, Dyfed

I asked Egon about this strange phenomena and he explained that ecto-magma, being a ghostly substance of an ethereal nature, is subject to the rules that govern the spiritual elements and that it, as in the case of the majority of ghosts, can appear and disappear at the drop of a hat! Nothing is simple or straightforward in the world of the paranormal.

I love Spengler's Spirit Guide. How does Egon know so much about ghosts?

—Alex Shelley, Birmingham

Egon has read about the world of the Supercosmos ever since he was able to open a book. His childhood hero was Tobin, a spook expert from ancient times. It could also have something to do with the fact that Egon is really a subhuman creation with a multitude of brains and information storage banks. Or maybe I'm just jealous!

I would like to know why it always seems to be you who ends up doing all the dangerous stuff. Are you the only one with a heroic streak as well as being the most with it of the Ghostbusters? How can one man have it all?

—Fran Talbot, Cardiff

Wow! Thanks, Fran, that's so kind of you to say! I like to think of myself as being a bit of a hero but, the other guys are pretty brave as well you know? Still, it's nice of you to say! There you go, I'm even modest with it!

THE INSPECTRE

Originating from the parish of St. Ichabod in Vermont, Josiah Ezekial Hopewright was otherwise known as The Inspectre. He acquired this title because of his job, which was to inspect haunted sites and rid them of restless spirits. A sort of Ghostbuster if you like. He was rather good at his job too and was the first real competition for The Ghostbusters. In fact, he was so good at his job, The Real Ghostbusters' business looked set to fold. It was only a bit of quick thinking on Janine's behalf that discovered The Inspectre had, in fact, died one hundred and twenty years previously, and so dedicated to his job was he, that the moment he found out he was a ghost, he promptly busted himself.



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THE HULK



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